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ROBERT S. PEABODY FOUNDATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGY

# ANNUAL REPORT

1941

PHILLIPS ACADEMY

Andover, Massachusetts



January 5, 1942

Dr. Claude M. Fuess  
Clerk of the Board of Trustees  
Phillips Academy  
Andover, Mass.

Dear Dr. Fuess:

During the year just passed, the Robert S. Peabody Foundation for Archaeology carried on no extensive project involving field work. This was in continuation of the policy of reducing the debt at as rapid a rate as is possible without unduly hampering the work of the Foundation. Intimate relations with other institutions engaged in archaeological research have been maintained, and it is a pleasure to record the fact that the members of the staff continue to play a large part in the affairs of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society which lists Mr. Bullen, Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Byers among its incorporators.

During the summer there arose an opportunity to carry on further investigations on the Haskell estate in Blue Hill, Maine. Following the vacating of the house by the family in September, Mr. Byers undertook to run extensive tests both under the house and on the lawns outside. Although these tests were carried on for periods of half a week at a time from the middle of September until the middle of October, no further evidence was uncovered. During this time Mr. Byers was in Andover for one half





of each week, conducting classes, and in Blue Hill for the other half, conducting excavations. It was hoped that data would be uncovered which might bear on the relationship between the material uncovered at the time of construction of the Haskell house and that uncovered by the Foundation's excavations on the Nevin and Richards properties. Beyond evidence of extensive disturbance of the ground by the workmen at the time of construction, nothing save three small sinkers was found. Mr. Moorehead published a brief note on the site in his *ARCHAEOLOGY OF MAINE*.

At the same time, a test was run through a small shell heap reputed to mark the site of an historic Indian village near Blue Hill Falls. The material recovered was in no way different from that recovered from the Nevin site. No evidence of trade material was secured, making this site useless as a possible anchor for the historic end of the culture column in the Blue Hill Bay region.

At the invitation of members of the Middleboro Archaeological Society, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Byers visited a site on Assawompsett Pond in Middleboro where artifacts reminiscent of the so-called Red Paint Culture of Maine had been excavated from a grave. While no further material was uncovered, enough was observed to serve to tie the site to an archaeological horizon which appears



to be of considerable antiquity.

For the coming year, field work is projected for a small site on Grassy Island in the Taunton River. At this site evidence of occupation has been secured which suggests that the island was occupied at a time when the water of the river stood at least six feet lower with respect to the land than it does at the present time. The projected field work, to be carried out in cooperation with the Division of Geology and Department of Biology of Harvard University, is intended to furnish more evidence of the antiquity of the human occupation of New England, toward which the Fishweir studies have made such a significant start.

At the invitation of Miss Priscilla Crane and Mr. Alexander Crane, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Pyers paid a visit to No Man's Land, a small island lying southwest of Martha's Vineyard. On this island evidence of occupation by the Vikings was at one time reported; Lief's Castle is still pointed out, and a "written rock," supposedly bearing a runic inscription may be seen at low water. No evidence of Norsemen was uncovered during the examination of the island, and the runic inscription was no longer to be seen. The rock on which this inscription was supposed to have been made is of gneiss that is cut by many small dikes and sills, some of which are contorted. The weathering out of these dikes may



have produced depressions which could have been interpreted as inscriptions or could have inspired a person so inclined to elaborate them into the semblance of an inscription. Lord Gray has elsewhere called attention to the errors in the runes, suggesting that this inscription was done at a date considerably later than that of 1001 A.D. which was on the rock.

Extensive peat bogs were observed in the depressions among the hills on the island. From one of these, hanging over the cliff on the south side of the island, fully one hundred feet above the sea, a cross-section of peat was obtained. Since No Man's Land may lie outside the limits of the last glaciation, this peat may be of extreme significance in establishing the complete pollen profile for New England. In this connection it is worthy of note that the Foundation continues to bring to the Department of Biology of Harvard University, peat samples and other data which may help to establish the sequence of events in New England in post-glacial time, and be of far-reaching significance in determining the validity of the pollen analytical method as a means of dating the human occupation of at least the eastern portion of North America.

During the days when Phillips Academy, together with the nation, is pointing its every effort toward the successful prosecution of the war, it may seem somewhat





irrelevant to consider future plans for field work. Nevertheless, it is perhaps well to pause at this time in order to take stock and to consider plans for the future. Admitting that there may possibly arise future emergencies such as that presented by the uncovering of the remains of the Fishweir under the foundations for the New England Mutual Life Insurance Building, and that these emergencies may upset what are otherwise well-laid plans, it would be wise to point toward the orderly working out of a program. At the present point, the Foundation finds itself nearly abreast of its field work. During the coming spring and summer, efforts will be devoted to working up the very extensive data secured from the excavation of the Nevin Shell Heap, and it may be that a start will also be made on the data from the Richards Shell Heap. These two sites represent the effort of three summers spent at Blue Hill, Maine. Subject, of course, to war conditions, plans should be laid for the carrying on of excavations in that same region, with careful testing of sites before any further major excavation is undertaken. From the numerous Indian sites in that region it may be possible to secure a series of material which will tie in to the protohistoric and historic Penobscot Indian village remains. If such were accomplished, it might go far toward solving the complicated problems attendant on archaeological work in the





northeastern part of the country. When work was first undertaken in Blue Hill, this opportunity was one of the deciding factors. As soon as possible this work should be resumed, bearing in mind the prosecution of the war, and the demands for a continuation of cultural and research activities compatible with maintaining morale and the standards of our research and teaching.

It is with a distinct feeling of pleasure that the completion of the installations in the Museum is here reported. This has been a slow, and arduous task, during which the staff of your Museum have enjoyed the great privilege of the confidence of the honorable Board. It is the feeling of your Director that this confidence has not been misplaced, as in the years that have elapsed much has been accomplished to make the Museum one of the outstanding exhibits of archaeological material in the country.

The remodelling of the building has already been recorded. Following the remodelling of the cases it was found necessary to paint the interiors in colors designed to show off to advantage the material to be displayed. This was accomplished through the rare good fortune of having in the building a man skilled in mixing and applying paints who has also an undying loyalty to his work and to the institution. Without the willing services of Mr. Charles Schofield, janitor of the Museum, it is safe



to say the work could never have been accomplished as well and under circumstances so favorable to the staff. He is deserving of the highest praise.

Restoration of specimens was the slowest and most trying part of the work. Pottery that has been inexpertly restored and in many cases, never washed must be taken apart, carefully washed, sometimes treated with preservatives, mended, and restored. Unwashed specimens must be cleaned, specimen numbers checked with meticulous care, and unnumbered specimens must be recataloged. Mr. Bullen was of great assistance in this work. It is a matter of considerable pleasure to record that in the restoration of the copper specimens excavated at Etowah by Mr. Moorehead, your Foundation has had the benefit of expert advice from Mr. Barss, and of equipment loaned by Mr. Barss, Mr. Dake, and Mr. Shields. The cleaning of these specimens was accomplished by the use of a very weak electric current while the specimens were suspended in an electrolyte consisting of weak sodium hydroxide. This caused the malignant patina which was destroying some of the fragile pieces to slough off, exposing a surface bearing designs absolutely faithful to the original, and which were in some cases, entirely unknown before cleaning began. Following this treatment, these fragile pieces, some of which are thinner than a piece of note paper, were mounted on glass sheets for preservation and exhibition.



During the course of installing the exhibits it became evident that certain new cases were needed. Three were built from regular funds, using a new type of construction that provides a case, well lighted, and adaptable to any purpose. The use of masonite pressed board made the construction of these cases a much less expensive job than would have been the case had wood been used. These cases are being extensively copied by other museums.

Since the outbreak of war many Museums have taken steps to move out large portions of their collections, or to store valuable specimens in places where they will be safe in the event of aerial bombardment. The Foundation has taken no steps to protect its collections, although certain specimens may be removed to a place of greater safety in the darkroom underneath the steps. It is the feeling of the staff that none of the material is really irreplaceable since most of it can be duplicated in museums in other parts of the country. The staff further feels that the value of a museum lies in its ability to serve as a place of education and relaxation for the public, and that as such it would not fulfill its function if it were to remove from exhibition any of its specimens. Your staff joins the staff of the Addison Gallery in feeling that the Museums of Phillips Academy can best serve the public by remaining open at all times,





and that the value of the specimens as an aid to public morale is greater than the value of these same specimens hidden away against the bare possibility of a chance hit. At this writing it seems that the most to be expected is a chance bombing of Andover by a raider driven away from an objective and forced to jettison a cargo of bombs to escape. Should conditions change, your staff might feel that the present policy should be altered.

During the year just passed, work on the manuscript of the report on the excavation of the Fishweir found in the Boston Back Bay has been completed, and is now in press at the plant of the George Santa Publishing Company, in Menasha, Wisconsin, the concern which handled the printing of TWO SITES ON MARTHA'S VINEYARD. THE BOYLSTON STREET FISHWEIR: A Study of the Archaeology, Biology, and Geology of a site on Boylston Street in the Back Bay District of Boston, Massachusetts by Frederick Johnson, in collaboration with Henry C. Stetson, Frances L. Parker, William J. Clench, Thurlow C. Nelson, David H. Linder, Irving W. Bailey, Elso S. Parghoorn, Edwin C. Jahn, William M. Harlow, William S. Benninghoff, Arthur S. Knox will appear as Volume II of the Papers of the Robert S. Peabody Foundation for Archaeology. This volume, which will consist of 224 pages with 30 illustrations, should be ready for distribution early in the spring.

During the year your Foundation has continued to





maintain the most intimate of relations with the Massachusetts Archaeological Society. Although the Editorship was taken away from Mr. Byers in October 1940, as recorded in the last annual report, this post was returned to him in October, 1941. Mr. Johnson continues in charge of ethnographic work under the Society, and Mr. Johnson and Mr. Byers both continue on the Research Council which dictates the research policies of the Society. Mr. Johnson, Mr. Bullen and Mr. Byers are among the incorporators of the Society. Through the Society, work on the documents relative to the early history of Massachusetts continues, with your Foundation as the center for the studies. This field of endeavor has been dealt with in earlier reports.

In continuation of the policy of maintaining close relations with all research in archaeology, the members of the staff of your Foundation have continued with their outside activities. Mr. Johnson has continued as Editor of the Eastern States Archaeological Federation and Editor of the NOTEBOOK, Mr. Byers as Editor of AMERICAN ANTIQUITY and of the BULLETIN OF THE MASSACHUSETTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY. In connection with these activities, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Byers attended the annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology held at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, Minnesota early in May, 1941. Following this meeting, they both visited the museum of



the Davenport Academy of Science in Davenport, Iowa, and attended the Woodland Conference held under the auspices of the University of Chicago. At this meeting they represented the eastern seaboard in the outlining of the Woodland archaeological pattern, a step which may prove to be of far-reaching archaeological significance in North America.

In November, Mr. Johnson attended the annual meeting of the Eastern States Archaeological Federation held at the University of Pennsylvania. This meeting was attended by representatives of the state archaeological societies from Maine to Georgia, and furnished an opportunity for the interchange of ideas among all societies represented. As has already been remarked, Mr. Johnson continues as the Editor of this organization.

The entire staff was present at the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society held in Plymouth, Massachusetts, on October 19, 1941.

During Christmas vacation the Foundation was host to the American Anthropological Association and allied societies, the American Ethnological Society and the American Folklore Society, which held their annual meetings at the same time, and the Society for American Archaeology, which held a regional meeting in conjunction with the other meetings. The sessions were attended by over 200 visiting anthropologists who were housed in



Foxcroft, Bartlet, Day, Paul Revere, and Bishop halls. An outstanding feature of the program was a symposium on MAN IN NORTHEASTERN NORTH AMERICA in which twelve persons participated. This symposium was held to celebrate the completion of the reinstallation of the exhibits in the Museum and the resumption by the Foundation of an active place in the field of American Archaeology. The Foundation plans to publish the papers submitted at the symposium as Volume III of the Papers of the Robert S. Peabody Foundation, in the form of a book written for the intelligent laymen, and so designed as to appeal to the student and general reader. Several papers, not submitted at the symposium, will be invited for the complete volume, those over and above the limit set by the Foundation to be paid for by outside subscription. It is contemplated that the volume will be dedicated to Dr. Frank G. Speck of the University of Pennsylvania, who has been a guide and the outstanding scholar in matters pertaining to the anthropology of the northeast during many years.

Your Foundation has continued to cooperate with all institutions desiring its assistance in any field. To this end, many of its choicest specimens were sent to the Museum of Modern Art in New York City for an exhibition of Indian Art in North America held between January 22 and April 27, 1941. This exhibition attracted comment





and acclaim from a great many persons throughout the nation. Following the closing of this exhibition, a travelling exhibition was put on the road by the Museum of Modern Art; in this exhibition a number of the more replaceable pieces belonging to your Foundation are being circulated among the museums of the country. During the exhibition of this material at the Worcester Art Museum some special loan exhibits were on display. These included some of the finer pieces from the Foundation's collections, together with a cast of a figure found by Dr. Kidder at Pecos, New Mexico. The cast was made by Mr. Byers and colored by Mr. Travis. In addition, Mr. Johnson was instrumental in arranging, for the Massachusetts Archaeological Society, an exhibit which was held at the New England Museum of Natural History during March, 1941. The specimens for this exhibition were largely obtained from the Foundation's collections.

At the present time there is under consideration a plan for the circulation of archaeological exhibits throughout the state. These exhibits, which are to be circulated through the medium of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society will be assembled, in part, from the collections of the Foundation, and will bear the name of Phillips Academy. They can only redound to the credit of the Academy, and should serve as one of the best ways of bringing the name of the Academy before the public.





During the fall the Academy embarked on a new schedule. This has resulted in a curtailment of free hours, and has rendered it more difficult for students to take the two hour elective course offered by your Department. Not only are fewer hours available to the students, but these free hours do not seem to coincide with the hours at which the course in Anthropology meets. It is with no surprise that your staff sees enrollment in this course cut from twelve to three. It is evident that with the tightening of pressure all around, enrollment in this course may drop to nothing during the next year.

In this connection it is worthy of note that Mr. Johnson is at present busy preparing a course in map reading which will be given under the revised program for preparation for war. This course may well be worth continuing on the permanent schedule after the war as a course in geography and map reading.

During the year 14 accessions were recorded in the Museum catalog. These include 24 specimens found in the collections but bearing no catalog numbers and re-cataloged, and 488 new specimens added to the collection. The greater part of these new specimens is from the collection of Mr. Arthur Hofmann of Ballardvale, who excavated them from sites near Ballardvale under the supervision of the Foundation.



Thirty-five new titles were added to the Library in addition to the fifty-six periodicals or exchanges which are received each year. The exchange list was increased by the addition of the universities of Arizona, Chicago, Nebraska, New Mexico, and Washington, the Milwaukee Public Museum, the Minnesota Historical Society, the Cranbrook Institute of Science, and the Excavator's Club of Harvard. The Library continues to be used by persons in the community and by students, although with the tighter schedule, the number of students has not been as great as in past years.

During the last fiscal year the Foundation operated on a budget of \$18,957. This made allowance for writing off of advances from capital to the extent of \$1200, and for a surplus of \$801 for transfer toward the reduction of the Accumulated Deficit, then amounting to \$2,908.83. Actual expenditures were \$624.03 below the budgeted amount, while income was \$1795.33 greater than was expected. This happy combination resulted in an unexpended balance of \$3,220.36, which has completely erased the accumulated deficit, leaving a surplus of \$311.53. This surplus has been applied against the sum advanced for the alterations to the building. Indebtedness on this account, which originally stood at \$19,000, amounted to \$11,564.75 as of June 30th; application of the surplus has reduced it to \$11,253.22.

Twenty-five new titles were added to the library

in addition to the 100 titles purchased in 1960.

Also the library was moved to the new building

located at the corner of the intersection of 10th

and 11th streets, New York, New York.

Extensive Public Reading Room, the library is open to the public

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Your Foundation is represented on the Red Cross Disaster Preparedness Committee by Mr. Johnson, as Co-chairman of Emergency Shelter and Housing, and by Mr. Byers, as Chairman of the Disaster Committee. Mr. Byers also serves as Chairman of the Division of Services and Supplies under the Massachusetts Committee on Public Safety.

In closing this report, the severe illness of Mr. Stuart Travis is recorded with great regret. In his quiet way he has done much to set a high standard in taste in installing specimens. He has been patient in teaching small techniques of great importance in restoring specimens and his wide knowledge of materials has been of inestimable value in many ways.

Respectfully submitted,

*Douglas W. Byers*

Director







